

***from Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, translated by Marie Borroff  
*from Morte d'Arthur* by Sir Thomas Mallory**  
**Reading Warm-up A**

*Read the following passage. Pay special attention to the underlined words. Then, read it again, and complete the activities. Use a separate sheet of paper for your written answers.*

When “courtly love” emerged during the 1100s, it consisted of a code of noble behavior called chivalry that fused loyalty, honor, self-sacrifice, and defense of the weak. It was made popular through tales of brave knights, and maidens who swooned when battles were fought in their name. Ideal love for one pure woman was supposed to inspire a knight to magnificent deeds. It was also expected to make the knight’s beloved marvel at his attempts to be worthy of her. Because of her virtue, the lady was put on a pedestal. For the first time, the woman was considered superior to her male suitor.

This attitude was a dramatic change in the way noble women were viewed. Although they received more respect, being adored didn’t give women more freedom, and they still had little choice when it came to a mate. Romantic love rarely led to a marriage, since matrimonial decisions were accorded to the parents of the bride and groom. Often wedding plans were made while the future husband and wife were still slumbering in their cradles.

The social classes and assets of both families had to be taken into account when marriages were arranged. A wealthy father would never promise his daughter to a hermit, or expect her to marry someone whose prospects were puny. It was understood that a man who married the daughter of a wealthy merchant would receive a generous dowry. Finances, not love, continued to determine most marriages. Money was still almighty, in spite of the poets, and the longing for true love that they created.

1. Circle the part of the sentence that tells what chivalry fused together to create a code of behavior. Then, give an antonym for *fused*.
2. Circle the words that explain when maidens swooned. Then, give a synonym for *swooned*.
3. Circle the words that tell who was expected to marvel at a knight’s attempts to be worthy. Then, rewrite the sentence using a synonym for *marvel*.
4. Circle the word that says what was accorded to parents. Define *accorded*.
5. Circle the words that tell who was slumbering. Describe *slumbering*.
6. Circle the part of the sentence that tells who would never promise his daughter to a hermit. Where might you find a *hermit*?
7. Underline the words that say what a father wouldn’t expect his daughter to do if a groom’s prospects were puny. What would you consider a *puny* sum?
8. Circle the word that tells what was almighty. Explain what *almighty* means.